



# SUPPORTING Lesser-Known Heroes of the Bible CHARACTERS

## NICODEMUS

John 3:1-5, 7:45-52, 19:38-42

Dan Aikins preaching

### Coming Attractions at MDPC

Sunday, July 23, 2017

#### Summer Serve: The Beacon

Summer is the perfect time to roll up your sleeves and jump into service! The Beacon at Christ Church Cathedral offers essential basics, transitional housing support with case management, and pro bono legal services to Houston's poor and homeless. MDPC will serve in the Beacon Day Center to prepare and serve lunch and wash, dry, and fold laundry. **Saturday, July 29 | 10:30 AM-1:30 PM**

Contact Jan Roe to sign up: [jroe@mdpc.org](mailto:jroe@mdpc.org)

Can't make it on the 29th? Check out more opportunities to share Christ's love at [summerserve.mdpc.org](http://summerserve.mdpc.org).

#### Colorful T-shirts Needed

Help The Antioch Partners (TAP), a long-term mission organization, by donating T-shirts to make TAPestries (rugs) for its fundraiser dinner at MDPC this fall.

Accepting Donations: July 1-August 27

Questions? Email Hope Whitney: [admin@theantiochpartners.org](mailto:admin@theantiochpartners.org)

#### Kanakuk KampOut! Day Camp

This week-long, high-energy Christian day camp is for 5- to 12-year-olds. Kampers will see and hear how God is a loving Creator who loves them and desires for us to love others. **August 7-11 | 9:30 AM-4:00 PM | MDPC**

More info: [kampout.mdpc.org](http://kampout.mdpc.org)

#### Elder Nominations

Elder Nominations for the class of 2020 are open, and your involvement in this process is essential!

Nominations are due Monday, August 28.

Visit [nominations.mdpc.org](http://nominations.mdpc.org), or pick up a form and return it to the Front Office, Attn: Gena Kookan.

#### Heads Up for Soccer Season!

Boys and girls in pre-K through 6th grade are invited to play on West Houston Christian Sports League teams coached by volunteers. Practices begin the week of Sept. 4 at MDPC. **Games at area churches: Saturdays, Sept. 23-Nov.11 \$120 (\$145 after Aug. 27) jersey, socks, picture, trophy** Registration opens today: [sports.mdpc.org](http://sports.mdpc.org)

#### Summer Movie Series

Beat the heat while enjoying free popcorn and the acclaimed film, *The Glenn Miller Story* (PG). Everyone is welcome! Stay for a brief guided discussion of the film and its impact on our Christian faith led by Pastor Rick Myers and Jeanmarie Tade, Interim Adult Ministries Director.

**Wednesday, August 2 | 3:00 PM | Amphitheater**

Visit [pluggedin.com](http://pluggedin.com) to review movie content for your family.

#### Men's Life: Conversations That Matter

Sometimes pitfalls can be avoided by having a simple conversation—just by facing things head on. This fall, we're encouraging men to have more conversations that will make a difference in life. The all-new 12-week series for men looks at how to overcome the barriers that keep us from living the abundant life God intended.

**Tuesdays, September 12-December 5 | 6:15-7:45 AM**

Details and registration: [ml.mdpc.org](http://ml.mdpc.org)

#### Plan to Attend the Marriage Retreat

Fabulous amenities and atmosphere, date night with your spouse, and expert teaching from Brett and Kellie Hurst.

**October 21-22 | Woodlands Waterway Marriott | \$215**

Registration is open: [marriageretreat.mdpc.org](http://marriageretreat.mdpc.org)

### 8:30 AM BLENDED • 9:45 AM CONTEMPORARY

WELCOME

\*SONGS OF PRAISE

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION & ASSURANCE

Rick Myers (8:30), Sarah Stone (9:45)

SONG OF RESPONSE

GIFTS OF GRATITUDE

MESSAGE

Supporting Characters: Nicodemus

Dan Aikins

Musicians in these services: Arthur Ceker and Sahily Esteves, worship leaders • Joe Gavito, guitar • Craig Gysler, keys • Asher Pudlo, drums • Dennis Whittaker, bass

### 11:15 AM TRADITIONAL

PRELUDE

*Sonata No. 1*

Felix Borowski (1872-1956)

WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP

Rick Myers

\*HYMN OF PRAISE

*All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*

#142; Vs. 1, 2, 4 | CORONATION

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH from Romans 8

\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

*The Gloria Patri*

Hymn #579

DUET

*Let Your Joy Be Known!*

Fred Bock (1939-1998)

OFFERTORY

*His Eye Is on the Sparrow*

Donald Moore (b. 1938)

MESSAGE

Supporting Characters: Nicodemus

Dan Aikins

\*HYMN OF RESPONSE

*My Faith Looks Up to Thee*

#383; Vs. 1, 2 | OLIVET

POSTLUDE

*All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*

arr. Diane Bish (b. 1941)

Musicians in this service: Jason Amos, tenor • Jessica Ferring, soprano • Charles Hausmann, conductor • Kathryn White, organist/pianist

\*Please stand if able.

CCLI #182374

# MDPC FEATURES

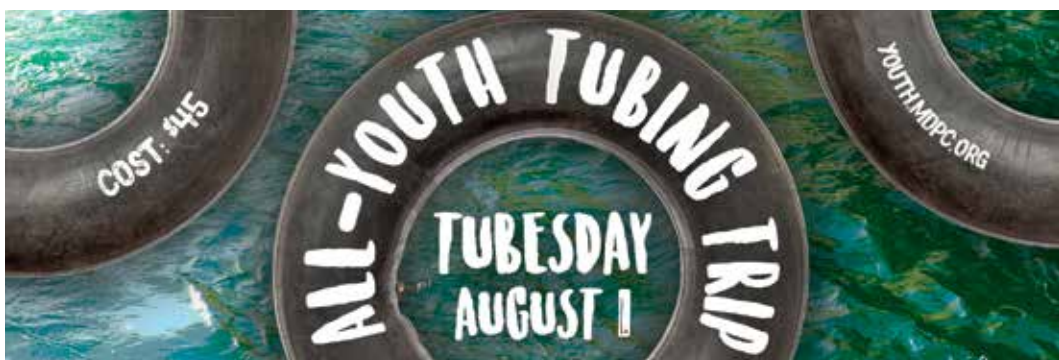


## SUFFERING: WHERE IS GOD?

HOW CAN GOD BE GOOD WHEN THERE IS SO MUCH HURT AND EVIL IN THIS WORLD?

**STARTS TODAY** SUNDAYS THROUGH AUGUST 6  
11:00 AM IN THE AMPHITHEATER

GUEST SPEAKERS – A PHILOSOPHY PROFESSOR, A PASTOR, AND A COUNSELOR – WILL HELP US WRESTLE WITH THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AND GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY.



## MOMS UNITE!

**MOPS**  
Mothers of Preschoolers

MOPs (Mothers of Preschoolers) is for moms of young kids. Come for connection, solid content, and fun. **We'll save a seat for you!**

**1ST & 3RD THURSDAYS STARTING SEPT. 7**  
**9:30-11:15 AM | FELLOWSHIP HALL**

**Free childcare!**  
Details and registration:  
[mops.mdpc.org](http://mops.mdpc.org)



**MDPC needs your help!** Share your summer-fun photos with us using the hashtag **#MDPCSummer17** on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Pictures posted to MDPC social media accounts by August 6 will be used in a look-back photo montage to be shown in worship.

### Outreach Ministry Partners 2017

This week, we ask that you pray for these partners in ministry that MDPC assists with your support:

**LIFE Houston (Local Infant Formula for Emergencies)** provides baby food, formula, and essentials like diapers, wipes, and bottles to families facing difficult circumstances. The program is the primary (sometimes only) referral source for other social service agencies, hospitals, and clinics that serve children younger than one year old.

[lifehouston.org](http://lifehouston.org)

**Little Angels Ministry** provides gift bags for newborns in the high-risk nursery at Ben Taub Hospital. The bags include hand-made cross-stitched T-shirts, knitted caps and booties, and a prayer request card to mail back to MDPC.

Contact **Sandy Griffith**:  
[sandygriffith@gmail.com](mailto:sandygriffith@gmail.com)

**Transitions Foundation** mobilizes disabled Guatemalans through rehabilitation, education, and spiritual development. It was founded to give dignity to the disabled as they work together to make custom wheelchairs and prosthetics. The diligence of the workers and excellent design of their products give new life to many with disabilities.

[transitionsfoundation.org](http://transitionsfoundation.org)

**The White Rose** is in memory of MDPC member Judy Snyder, who passed away July 8, 2017.

### MDPC Coordinating Team

Mauricio Chacón | Latino Ministries Pastor  
Amy Delgado | Interim Outreach Director  
Bob Giles | Interim Business Administrator  
Ginny Glass | Communications & Media Director  
Meliza Gómez | Contemporary Music Director  
Alf Halvorson | Senior Pastor  
Charles Hausmann | Traditional Music Director  
Brett Hurst | Relationships Pastor

Christyn Knoop | Young Adults Director  
Gena Kookan | Senior Leadership Ministry Coord.  
Laura Miller | Youth Director  
Rick Myers | Caring Ministries Pastor  
Rachel Poysky | Children's Pastor  
Dave Steane | Executive Pastor  
Kathryn White | Coordinating Music Director  
Karen Winship | Human Resources Director

**Pastors Emeritus:** Dave Peterson • Gary Bowker



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<b>2017 OPERATING BUDGET</b>	\$11,400,000
Expected Income to Date	\$ 4,661,733
Actual Income to Date (July 16, 2017)	\$ 4,517,290
<b>Current Income Deficit</b>	<b>\$ 144,443</b>
Needed to Meet 2017 Budget	\$ 6,882,710

## SUPPORTING Lesser-Known Heroes of the Bible CHARACTERS

### Nicodemus

John 3:1-15  
Dan Aikins preaching

This sermon continues the summer series on the *Supporting Characters* in Scripture—those figures who work behind the scenes in God’s story. Nicodemus is a curious Supporting Character. The other three gospels tell of how Joseph of Arimathea buried Jesus, but only John reveals that Nicodemus was there, too. John’s account makes you wonder. Who is this guy? Why is he burying Jesus? Why did John think he was important enough to include in the story? What events led to Nicodemus being there at the tomb?

We first meet Nicodemus in John 3 when he has an extended conversation with Jesus, and from what we learn of him in this chapter, we might be surprised to see him burying Jesus later in the story. Nicodemus is a Pharisee who also is a member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling Jewish council. None of the gospels paint the Pharisees or the members of the Sanhedrin in a friendly light; they usually are Jesus’ challengers, accusers, and, ultimately, a party to His execution.

Something must have changed Nicodemus from simply being a Pharisee and a leader of the Jews to one who cared for Jesus in His death.

- I shared a story of my niece, Henley, when she was struggling to understand that “daddy” also was a son and husband. “Son” and “husband” didn’t fit into her mental model for “daddy.” Her initial mental model was challenged, but that led to greater understanding. Have you ever had an experience of one mental model giving way to another that was more complete? When was that?
- John intentionally writes the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus to be a little confusing. He uses a play on words to show that Jesus and Nicodemus have two different understandings of how someone sees or experiences the kingdom of God. How would you describe Nicodemus’ initial mental model of how one enters the kingdom? Hint: It has to do with credentials and knowledge.
- Jesus patiently presents a reality that challenges Nicodemus’ mental model. A person’s earthly credentials and knowledge simply don’t cut it. Someone must be “born again/from above.” This is a work of the Holy Spirit who, like the wind, simply cannot be controlled or manipulated. Why do you think Nicodemus has such a hard time grasping this?
- This conversation also offers a challenging reminder to the church; our mental models of God and faith do not always align with Scripture. What are some historical examples of when the Church’s beliefs or practices had to be corrected? Do you have any personal experiences when God did this in your faith?
- The church’s conception of evangelism (i.e. helping other people come to trust Jesus) has been challenged over the last few decades. How have you been taught to do evangelism? Has it been effective?

Watch a short video to learn more about how evangelism is done through Alpha by scanning the QR code at right, or typing this link into your browser: [goo.gl/MsZ4DK](http://goo.gl/MsZ4DK)

